

September 23, 2002

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dennis M. Sullivan called a Long Range Planning Committee of the Whole Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Board of Aldermen Chambers at City Hall, at 7:00 p.m., to discuss Space Issues for 2003-2004 and the Conwell School.

II. ROLL CALL

Present were Ms. Cardoso, Ms. Murray, Ms. Bauer, Ms. Harris, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Rossetti, and Chairman Sullivan.

Mayor Gay and Alderman White were absent.

Also present were Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Albert F. Argenziano, Ms. Marie B. Ferrari, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, Dr. Steven F. Jenkins, District Administrator for Student Services, Mr. Anthony C. Caliri, Human Resources Manager and approximately 27 members of the audience.

III. SPACE ISSUES FOR 2003-2004

Chairman Sullivan opened the meeting, welcomed everyone present and then invited Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Albert F. Argenziano, to begin discussion regarding the future direction of the Somerville Public Schools. Dr. Argenziano provided the school committee members and members of the audience an outline of topics for a strategic plan and discussed the items as follows:

1. Fiscal Situation State, Federal, Local
2. Budget Reduction
3. Declining Enrollment
4. Downsizing the Organization
 - a) Structural
 - b) Staffing
 - c) Combination of A + B
5. Reduction in Poverty levels of community
6. Reduced numbers in TBE (before and after Unz Referendum)
7. Reduced Federal monies (2 – 3 year cycle downward)
8. Reduced State monies (2 – 3 year cycle downward)
9.

Present Budget -	\$52,000,000.	
Present soft money forecast -	\$8,000,000.	
Total -	\$60,000,000.	
<u>Next Year Forecast – Budget</u>	\$50,000,000.	
Soft money forecast	\$ 6,000,000.	
Total	\$56,000,000.	
Net loss -	\$4,000,000.	
10. St. Polycarp's, Boys & Girls Club } Moving Expenses
11. Old Edgerly – New Edgerly
12. Closing other schools
13. Reduction in Staff (\$40,000. x 25 = \$1,000,000.)
14. October 1 numbers

III. SPACE ISSUES FOR 2003-2004 (cont.)

15. Scheduled meetings in October, November. December
16. CEO/Staff will provide ALL DATA that allows Somerville School Committee to make decisions before 1/1/03.

When discussion was completed the Superintendent answered questions asked by the school committee and addressed any concerns they had. Dr. Argenziano advised that he was not making any recommendations at this evening's meeting and informed members that he and his staff would gather all the necessary information and provide it to members for discussion at future Long Range Planning Committee meetings in order for them to make a decision to have ready to bring back to the staff and parents by January 2003.

Topics of concern by the school committee were 1) if the bottom line figure of \$50,000.000 for FY04 was a realistic one; 2) if the city could level fund the school department at \$52,000.000 once again; and 3) if the Conwell School was to be sold, would the school department see any of that money?

Ms. Rossetti requested that correspondence be sent to the Mayor asking for her response to these concerns.

Chairman Sullivan asked input from any members of the audience and invited those who wished, to come forward and speak.

The following three people addressed the school committee:

- ✓ Kirsten Russell, Co-Chair, Choice Program
- ✓ Ms. Rose Durham, Co-Parent, child at the Brown School
- ✓ Mr. Jim Thomas, Parent, one child at Somerville High School and two children at the Brown School

IV. CONWELL SCHOOL DISCUSSION

At the last Finance and Facilities Committee of the Whole meeting the Mayor had requested the school committee, through Chairman Rossetti, to discuss the possibility selling the Conwell School. The Mayor was not able to attend this evening's meeting so discussion was put on hold until the next Long Range Planning Committee meeting. It was requested that communication be sent to the Mayor asking for dates she would be available to attend the meetings. The Mayor, at that time, would be able to respond to any questions or address any concerns that were brought up regarding the Conwell School. Chairman Sullivan responded that he would contact the Mayor's office to find out what dates she would be available to attend the meetings.

Ms. Taylor mentioned she is aware that school committee meeting dates are posted in all school buildings but she would like to further request that when the Long Range Planning Committee is scheduled to meet, a letter be sent to all buildings informing staff and parents of these meetings.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano
Secretary